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The Crafty Ploughboy

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The Crafty Ploughboy, OR Highwayman Outwitted

J. Pitts, 6, Great St Andrew street,

PLEASE draw near and the truth I'll declare,
Of a farmer that lived in Herefordshire,
A fine Yorkshire boy he had for his man,
For to do his business his name it was John.
One morning right early he went for his man,
And when he came to him all this he re-sign'd,
He says take this cow this day to the fair,
She is in good order and her I can spare.
Away the boy went with his cow in a band,
He came to the fair as you shall understand,
And in a short time he met with three men,
Sold one of them his cow for six pound ten.
They went to the alehouse in order to drink,
Where farmer paid the boy down the chink,
The boy to the mistress thus he did say,
What ma t I do with my money I pray
I'll sew it within thy coat lining says she,
For fear on the road thou robbed should be,
And there sat a highwayman drinking of wine,
Thought he to himself now the money is mine.
The boy took his leave and homeward did go,
The highwayman he folow'd after also
And he soon overtook him upon the highway,
Well overtaken young man he did say,
Will you get up behind me the highwayman said,
Now far are you going? replied the lad,
Three or four miles for what I do know,
So he got up behind him and away he did go,
They rode till they came into a dark lane,
Now says the highwayman I will tell you plain,
Deliver your money without fear or strife,
Or else I shall certainly take your sweet life,
The boy found that there was no time to dispute,
So he alighted from him without fear or doubt,
Tore his coat lining and the money pulled out
And among the long grass he strew'd it about,
The highwayman ex-alighted off from his horse,
But little did he dream it was for his loss,
For he could find all the money they say,
The boy jump'd on horseback and rode away,
The highwayman shout'd and bid him to stay,
The boy would not hear him but kept on his way,
And to his old master the boy he did bring,
Horse, saddle and bridle a very fine thing.
The master came to the door and said thus,
What the pox is my cow turn'd into a horse,
The boy said good master your cow I have sold,
But was robbed on the way by an highwayman bold
My money I strew'd it about the ground,
For to take it up in the rogue alighted down,
and while he was putting it into his purse,
To make him amends I came off with his horse,
The master laugh'd while his side he could he
And said for a boy thou hast been very bold,
As for the villain thou hast served him right,
and have put on him a right Yorkshire bite,
they searched his bag and quickly they told,
Two hundred pounds in silver and gold,
and two brace of pistols the boy said I vow,
And I think no good master I told well your cow
This boy for his courage and valour so rare,
Three parts of the money he got for his share,
and now since the highwayman has lost his store,
he may go a robbing until he gets more.